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Status of Day Care in Canada 1993

A Review of the Major Findings
of the National Day Care Study 1993

National Child Care Information Centre
Child Care Programs Division

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Canada

Preface

Status of Day Care in Canada 1993 is intended to present a general overview of day care services in Canada.

This publication was developed, with the co-operation of provincial authorities, by the National Child Care Information Centre, Child Care Programs Division, Department of Human Resources Development.

If you have any comments on *Status of Day Care in Canada 1993*, please contact the National Child Care Information Centre, Department of Human Resources Development, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1B5, (613) 954-8258.

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Major Findings

Increase in Day Care Spaces

Since 1971, the first year the federal government gathered data on national day care, there has been significant growth in the number of day care spaces. In 1971 there were 17 391 spaces. In 1993 there were 362 818 spaces. This represents a twenty-fold increase.

Each subsequent year since 1971 has shown a rate of growth between 10% and 16%, with only a few exceptions until 1990 when the rate dropped to 7.56%. This downward trend continued in 1991 to 3.89%, the lowest rate of growth since 1978. The rate of growth in 1992, although still low, climbed to 5.28%. The rate of growth in 1993 has slowed again, to 3.46%.

The number of full-time day care spaces in Canada in 1993 was 362 818. This is an increase of 12 138.

Centre care spaces increased by 5 634.

Family day care spaces increased by 6 904.

Table 1 indicates the growth of centre and family day care spaces by year.

The overall rate of growth in 1993 was 3.46% compared to 5.28% in 1992.

The rate of growth for family day care over 1992 was 14.54%.

The rate of growth for centre day care over 1992 decreased by 1.90%.

Age Groups Served by Day Care Programs

As indicated in Table 2, the availability of day care services differs according to the age of the child.

As in the past, day care centre spaces are primarily being used by children between the ages of three and six years. The spaces available to this age group account for 178 833 or 58% of the total day care centre spaces.

Only 46 308 or 15% of centre spaces are filled by children under the age of three. This contrasts with the Family Day Care program where there are 17 279 spaces (31.77%) serving children under three.

School-age day care spaces account for 93 561, and constitutes 25.79% of the day care spaces.

Sponsorship of Day Care Centres

In 1968, 75% of all day care spaces were under commercial auspices. The percentage of commercial spaces has dropped over the years. The decline of the commercial sector continued in 1993 constituting 30.46% of the total centre spaces. The non-profit sector constitutes 69.54% of the total centre spaces.

The number of non-profit day care centre spaces increased by 597 while the commercial centre spaces decreased by 337.

Tables 3 and 4 show the distribution and relative growth of day care spaces under different types of sponsorship.

Day Care Spaces by Province and Territory

Table 5 shows full-time centre spaces and family day care spaces by province and territory. Table 6 provides comparison by auspice.

Full-time Day Care Spaces in Canada in Relation to the Number of Day Care Age Children of Parents in the Labour Market

The mandate for *Status of Day Care in Canada* has been to show the year-by-year growth patterns in day care.

However, there has always been some interest in relating these findings to the degree of unmet need. The data provided by the provinces does not lend itself directly to this type of analysis. To address this question, the early *Status of Day Care in Canada* reports compared the number of full-time day care spaces to the number of children of mothers who were in the labour force. The problem with this approach is that many mothers work part-time and do not require a full-time day care space. This creates an exaggerated impression of the degree of unmet need.

On the other hand, if only the data on children of two parents who work full-time are considered, actual need may be under-estimated, in that a parent working 20 hours a week would not likely find a part-time day care space to match the hours needed for care.

Consequently, *Status of Day Care in Canada* now uses a format which presents four separate compilations estimating the percentage of children who can be served by existing day care spaces. The four separate compilations are for children 0-17 months; children between 18 months and 35 months; children age 3 to 5 inclusive and children between 6 and 12 years.

This approach compares only the number of full-time day care spaces to the number of children by various ages where the parents are involved in one of the four categories. It should not be construed to relate to the number of children whose parents would choose a formalized day care setting if it were made available.

Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10 relate the four categories and parental work situations to the percentage of full-time day care spaces available.

The existing evidence of parental preference is sketchy at best, but it does seem to suggest that about 50% of those not using formalized care would do so if provided the opportunity. However, a number of variables need to be researched before definitive statements can be made.

Another consideration is the impact of full-time kindergarten and part-time junior kindergarten in the school system on the demand for day care.

Table 2 shows that the percentage of spaces available for five-year-olds and, to a lesser extent, for four-year-olds is significantly lower than for three-year-olds. Some provinces and territories have difficulty reporting the actual number of children in their centres by age and some of the figures in this table are best estimates. The age breakdown is much less reliable than are the data on the number of spaces available by auspice.

Table 1 – Distribution of Centre Spaces, Family Day Care Spaces and Day Care Centres by Year

Number of Spaces	March 31 1971	March 31 1985	March 31 1991	March 31 1992	March 31 1993	Increase over 1992	
						No.	%
Centre Spaces	16 791	169 751	292 338	302 790	308 424	5 634	1.86
Family Day Care Spaces	600	22 623	40 744	47 490	54 394	6 904	14.54
Total Spaces	17 391	192 374	333 082	350 680	362 818	12 138	3.46
Day Care Centres	682	4 685	7 283	8 355	8 196	(159)	-1.90

The number of centres reported in 1991 was lower than in 1990 and higher again in 1992. It is likely that an error in reporting took place in 1991.

Table 2 – Spaces in Day Care Centres and Family Day Care Homes by Age of Children Served (1993)

Ages*	Day Care Centres		Family Day Care Homes	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-17 mos.	23 420	7.59	8 473	15.58
18-35 mos.	22 888	7.42	8 806	16.19
3 years	88 177	28.59	8 950	16.45
4 years	44 481	14.42	8 943	16.44
5 years	46 175	14.97	8 944	16.44
6-10 years	80 028	25.95	9 810	18.04
10-12 years	3 255	1.06	468	0.86
Total	308 424	100.00	54 394	100.00

*Some provinces/territories are not able to provide breakdowns by age and in such cases, estimates have been provided.

Table 3 – Sponsorship of Centre Spaces 1979, 1985 and 1993

Type of Sponsorship	1979		1985		1993	
	Spaces	% of Spaces	Spaces	% of Spaces	Spaces	% of Spaces
Non-Profit	42 534	50.59	106 131	62.52	214 480	69.54
Commercial	41 549	49.41	63 631	37.48	93 944	30.46
Total	84 083	100.00	169 762	100.00	304 424	100.00

Table 4 – Sponsorship of Centre Spaces 1992 and 1993

Type of Sponsorship	1992 Spaces	1993 Spaces	Increase	
			No.	%
Non-Profit	208 509	214 480	5 971	2.86
Commercial	94 281	93 944	(337)	-0.36
Total	302 854	308 424	5 570	1.84

Table 5 – Interprovincial Comparison of Day Care Spaces

Provinces/ Territories	Centre Spaces	Family Day Care Spaces	Centres
Newfoundland	2 554	0	85
Prince Edward Island	2 444	60	70
Nova Scotia	6 989	136	187
New Brunswick	7 344	90	215
Quebec	81 398	12 210	1 656
Ontario	118 938	15 793	2 955
Manitoba	11 553	3 386	305
Saskatchewan	4 301	2 387	116
Alberta	43 615	8 116	1 091
British Columbia	27 761	12 135	1 458
Northwest Territories	775	56	33
Yukon	752	25	25
National Totals	308 424	54 394	8 196

Table 6 – Interprovincial Comparison of Day Care Centre Spaces by Auspice

Provinces/Territories	Non-Profit	Commercial	Total
Newfoundland	559	1 995	2 554
Prince Edward Island	1 480	964	2 444
Nova Scotia	4 054	2 935	6 989
New Brunswick	4 145	3 199	7 344
Quebec	68 910	12 488	81 398
Ontario	89 344	29 594	118 938
Manitoba	10 370	1 183	11 553
Saskatchewan	4 136	165	4 301
Alberta	12 885	30 730	43 615
British Columbia	17 430	10 331	27 761
Northwest Territories	610	165	775
Yukon	557	195	752
National Totals	214 480	93 944	308 424

Table 7 – Infant Day Care – Children 0-17 Months

Category of Parent	Number of Children	% of Children Served
Mothers in labour force	348 145	9.16
Full-time working parents ⁽¹⁾	197 162	16.18
Full-time working parents ⁽²⁾ plus students	210 755	15.13
Full-time working parents plus students, plus parents working 20 to 29 hours a week ⁽³⁾	254 847	12.51

As of March 1993, there were 31 893 full-time day care spaces for children 0-17 months of age. As can be seen from the above four compilations, the percentage of children these spaces can serve differs according to which groups of parents are included in the compilation.

Table 8 – Children between the Ages of 18-36 Months (inclusive)

Category of Parent	Number of Children	% of Children Served
Mothers in labour force	342 287	9.26
Full-time working parents ⁽¹⁾	185 643	17.07
Full-time working parents ⁽²⁾ plus students	187 596	16.89
Full-time working parents plus students, plus parents working 20 to 29 hours a week ⁽³⁾	238 153	13.13

As of March 1993, there were 31 694 full-time day care spaces for children between the ages of 18 months and 36 months.

Table 9 – Children between the Ages of 3 and 6 Years

Category of Parent	Number of Children	% of Children Served
Mothers in labour force	683 347	30.10
Full-time working parents ⁽¹⁾	351 564	58.50
Full-time working parents ⁽²⁾ plus students	383 676	53.60
Full-time working parents plus students, plus parents working 20 to 29 hours a week ⁽³⁾	476 987	43.12

As of March 1993, there were 205 670 day care spaces for children between the ages of 3 and 6 years.

Table 10 – Children between the Ages of 6 and 10 Years

Category of Parent	Number of Children	% of Children Served
Mothers in labour force	1 245 005	7.22
Full-time working parents ⁽¹⁾	660 391	13.60
Full-time working parents ⁽²⁾ plus students	712 483	12.61
Full-time working parents ⁽³⁾ plus students, plus parents working 20 to 29 hours a week	880 694	10.20

As of March 1993, there were 89 838 day care spaces for children between the ages of 6 and 10 years.

Table 11 – Children between the Ages of 6 and 13 Years

Category of Parent	Number of Children	% of Children Served
Mothers in labour force	1 761 257	5.30
Full-time working parents ⁽¹⁾	955 464	9.75
Full-time working parents ⁽²⁾ plus students	1 023 640	9.14
Full-time working parents ⁽³⁾ plus students, plus parents working 20 to 29 hours a week	1 262 263	7.41

As of March 1993, there were 93 561 day care spaces for school-age children.

Notes

1. This category includes lone parents working full time, and includes two-parent families in which both parents work full time.
2. This category includes full-time working parents, lone parents who are full-time students, two-parent families in which one parent works full time and the other is a full-time student, and two-parent families in which both parents are full-time students.
3. This category includes full-time working parents, student-parents, lone parents who work 20 to 29 hours a week, two-parent families in which one parent works full time and the other 20 to 29 hours a week, two-parent families in which both parents work 20 to 29 hours a week, and two-parent families in which one parent works 20 to 29 hours a week and the other is a full-time student.

Glossary

Auspice – Sponsorship and/or the responsibility for the day care program, i.e. non-profit community board or commercial operator.

Centre care – Care given to groups of children in a licensed day care centre.

Commercial centre – A licensed day care centre that is set up as a proprietary operation. The term describes larger franchise operations, as well as the small, individually owned centres.

Community board centre – A licensed day care centre that is established as a non-profit organization and is governed by a community board of directors.

Day care facility – For the purposes of this report, a licensed or provincially approved centre or private home providing care for children outside of their own home for eight to ten hours a day.

Family day care – A program involving the selection and supervision by a government or authorized private agency of private families who give care to children during the day.

Infant day care – Care provided by a day care centre or a family day care home for children under the age of two.

Latch-key child – School-age child of working parents who carries house keys to gain entrance to home after school and before parents return from work.

Non-profit day care – For the purposes of this report, includes both community board centres and co-operative day care programs.

Preschool day care – Care provided by a day care centre or a family day care home for children aged two to six.

Private or casual day care arrangements – Arrangements between the parent and the provider, such as those involving a private baby-sitter, which are not under the supervision of a licensing authority or day care agency.

Public day care – A licensed day care centre owned and operated by a municipal or provincial government.

School-age day care – Supervision of young school-age children before school begins, during the noon hour, after class, and on days when school is not in session.